



Fact Sheet

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I. INTRODUCTION

The USO strengthens America's military service members by keeping them connected to family, home and country, throughout their service to the nation. For 75 years, the USO, a private, nonprofit organization, has served the men and women of the U.S. military and their families throughout their service – from the moment they join, through their deployments and as they transition back to their communities. Over time, the USO has become the vital bridge between Americans and their military service members.

Today's service members need the care, comfort, connection and support that can only be provided by an organization that is with them at every milepost of their military journey. The USO is *always by their side*, continuously adapting to the needs of our men and women in uniform and their families, so they can focus on their very important mission. The USO is a family of volunteers, sustained by the charitable contributions of millions of generous Americans. We are united in our commitment to support America's service members by keeping them connected to the very things they've sworn to defend – home and family. Our work is America's most powerful expression of gratitude to the men and women who secure our nation's freedoms.

In September, the USO launched [Force Behind the Forces](#), a brand awareness campaign encouraging Americans to stand behind "The Force," as a community of supporters committed to connecting service members to the things they hold dear. Being a Force Behind the Forces means you pledge to demonstrate your appreciation of those who selflessly serve our nation.

The campaign underscores USO's historic mission to connect service members to family, home and country, and simultaneously aims to address the [civilian-military drift](#) – a natural disconnect and lack of understanding between those who have served in the military and those who have never served. It encourages a united American "force" driven to meet the needs of service members and their families, further connecting them to those they protect.

"Our hope is for this campaign to inspire action by showcasing tangible ways the American public can get involved in supporting the one percent who serve and protect," said USO CEO and President J.D. Crouch II. "The Force Behind the Forces is the USO platform to enable a connection between people in our communities, and our military."

II. USO OPERATIONS

At the USO, we learn a lot about the needs of service members and their families over the course of their more than 10 million interactions with us at centers and through programs and services around the world. This information feeds our annual planning, budgeting and decision making. Donors are interested in the impact a donated dollar has on the community a charity serves. At the USO, we are fortunate to have supporters who provide a range of in-kind goods and services that allow us to get greater value for every dollar donated to us.

A. FACTS & FIGURES

- Number of Locations: **more than 180**
 - 10 Countries
 - 30 States

- Volunteers
 - Number of Volunteers: **30,000**
 - Volunteer Hours: **1.6M**
- 2015 Core Traffic
 - TOTAL: 6.4 million
- 2015 Local Program Participants
 - TOTAL: 3.2 million
- World-wide TOTAL SERVICE INSTANCES in 2015: 10 million
 - Center Visits: 6.4 million
 - Center Programs: 3.2 million
 - Entertainment: 230,000
 - W&F Programs 180,000
 - RP/6: 400*
- SWA Satellite Data
 - 7,403,991 Minutes Talked
 - 778,462 Calls Placed
 - Number of WiFi Sessions: 421,354
- For additional facts and figures, please contact [Amanda Fletcher](#)

*Program was launched at the end of 2015

B. USO LOCATIONS: The USO provides programs, entertainment and services at more than 180 USO locations worldwide, including Afghanistan, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Germany, Italy, Japan, Guam, South Korea, Turkey, Djibouti and the United States. In 2015, USO locations were visited more than 6.4 million times by service members and their families. USO locations provide a warm and comforting place where they can connect via internet or telephone, play a video game, catch a movie, have a snack or just put their feet up and relax. Currently, the two locations in Kuwait are collectively averaging more than 48,000 visits monthly, while the two locations in the United Arab Emirates average nearly 40,000 visits monthly. This year, the USO is celebrating the opening of several new locations including, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska; Phoenix MEPS; Wright Patterson AFB, Ohio; Pohakuloa Training Area, Hawaii; Hanscom AFB, Massachusetts; Newark International Airport, New Jersey; Orlando International Airport, Florida; Fort Jackson MEPS, South Carolina; Indianapolis MEPS; Denver MEPS; La Crosse Regional Airport, Wisconsin; NAS Sigonella, Italy; Incirlik, Turkey; Camp Kinser, Okinawa, Japan.

There are several other locations underway, including: Fort Sill, Oklahoma; Joint Base San Antonio/Fort Sam Houston, Texas; Yokota Air Base, Japan; Sacramento MEPS, California. And still more in planning, including Eielson AFB and Fort Wainwright, Alaska; Creech AFB, Nevada; Fort Stewart, Georgia; San Jose MEPS, California; Fort Hamilton MEPS; New York and Iwakuni, Japan.

- i. **MEPS:** The Military Entrance Processing Stations (MEPS) is a Department of Defense joint-service organization staffed with military and civilian professionals who support enlistment at various locations across the US. In 2016, the USO has

expanded its presence to several MEPS to provide additional support for service members on what may be the very first day of their military career. By increasing USO presence at MEPS, we are able to introduce new recruits and their families to the wide range of USO support they'll find during different phases of their military careers. Service members and their families visiting MEPS often experience long wait times for appointments and evaluations and the USO can provide relaxation space and entertainment to help them pass the time. The USO currently operates centers inside MEPS in Phoenix; Denver; Indianapolis; Baltimore; Raleigh and Charlotte, North Carolina; Cleveland and Columbus, Ohio; Fort Jackson, South Carolina; Dallas, El Paso and Houston, Texas; Fort Lee MEPS, Virginia; Nashville, Tennessee and Milwaukee, Wisconsin. There are three more MEPS facilities planned for Sacramento and San Jose, California and at Fort Hamilton, New York.

- C. **USO VOLUNTEERS:** Volunteers are the heart of the USO. They deliver goodness to our service members and their families in our centers and the community at locations around the world. The USO is honored to have 30,000 volunteers across the globe who gave 1.5 million hours last year in service to service members and families. In September, the USO announced its 2016 USO Volunteers of the Year. Ron Meier of Bob Hope USO at Palm Springs is the USO Volunteer of the Year, Stateside, and Ralph Nelsen of USO Osan, South Korea is the USO Volunteer of the Year, Overseas.

D. **TellUSO SURVEY:**

In 2015, the USO concluded its seventh annual TellUSO Survey designed to systematically measure and collect ideas and opinions of service members and their families to help our organization improve the programs and services we provide to those we serve around the globe. The TellUSO Sound Off Survey measures customer satisfaction and is focused on capturing awareness, use, satisfaction and derived value of USO programs and services.

Highlights from the 2015 survey include:

- In 2015, the USO is delivered on its mission to connect service members to family, home and country:
 - 96 percent of service members and their families surveyed agree that “the USO boosts the morale of service members.”
 - 91 percent of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with USO programs and USO centers
- Centers remain the most important service offered by the USO:
 - 82 percent of active duty respondents used a USO center in the past 12 months and 75 percent of active duty respondents used a USO center in the past 6 months.
 - Rest and relaxation, food or beverage and internet access remain the top three reasons for visiting a USO center.

- 85% or more of survey Active Duty service member respondents indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the following:
 1. Centers (96%)
 2. Mobile (89%)
 3. Travel Tours (94%)
 4. Classes (87%)
 5. Comfort Crew (91%)
 6. Sesame Street (90%)
 7. Holiday Boxes (96%)
 8. MEGS (87%)
 9. UTR (97%)
 10. Phones (93%)
 11. Entertainment Events (95%)
 12. Career Opportunities Days (87%)

III. USO PROGRAMS

Who do we serve?

- A. Active Duty, National Guard and Reserve
- B. Military Families
- C. Transitioning Service Members and their Families
- D. Wounded, Ill and Injured Service Members, their Families and Caregivers
- E. Families of the Fallen

A. **ACTIVE DUTY, NATIONAL GUARD and RESERVE**

- i. **USO2GO:** Designed to send much-needed electronic gaming, sports/musical equipment and personal care items to service members in remote locations, USO2GO was launched in 2008 to ensure they have some of the small comforts of home. USO2GO boxes have been delivered to more than 800 remote places in Afghanistan, Iraq, the Philippines, Egypt, Djibouti, Jordan, Australia, Kuwait and Northwest Africa. To date, the USO has shipped more than 1,500 kits, and USO2GO continues to be the program most requested directly from the field that helps our deployed service members relax and recharge.
- ii. **USO MOBILE CENTERS:** Acting as a USO centers on wheels, USO Mobile centers offer service members the same kind of great support the USO provides in an airport or installation location. These large mobile centers travel to big events and military exercises to provide a place for service members to relax during downtime, provide USO service to areas without a brick and mortar USO center and support our centers and the community in times of crisis. Each Mobile USO offers laptops, large screen televisions, video game consoles, Wi-Fi access, casual seating, refrigerators, coffee makers and microwaves.

In 2016, the USO unveiled its newest Mobile USO that is 38 feet long with three slide outs and a canteen window that will be able to support more service members than its predecessors. It includes two 65-inch TVs, five Xbox gaming systems, internal and external sound systems and is wheelchair-accessible. In early 2017, there are plans to add an additional USO Mobile

center and two large Sprinter vans to the USO's mobile fleet. The new mobile center will serve where it's needed. One Sprinter will serve Alaska, while the other serves Texas.

- iii. **OPERATION PHONE HOME®:** Operation Phone Home® is one of the most frequently requested services from our forward-deployed service members. At our centers located in combat zones, service members use the USO's private phone network to make free phone calls home, access computers with free high-speed Internet bandwidth and free wireless Internet for use with their own computers. More and more expectant fathers take advantage of this free Internet access to virtually accompany their wives in the delivery room for the birth of their children. In Southwest Asia alone, connectivity is the number one reason service members visit our centers. In 2015, 778,462 calls were placed by deployed service members – that is more than 7.4 million minutes of free talk time for service members to reconnect with their families. The USO also provided a total of 421,354 Wi-Fi sessions in Afghanistan and Kuwait. For those forward-deployed service members who are serving in remote areas without access to our centers, in 2015, the USO provided 43,000 free international prepaid calling cards. To date, the USO has provided more than 3.2 million free prepaid international calling cards, allowing service members to connect with their loved ones back home. In other places around the world, many USO locations also offer free Internet and free phone calls.
- iv. **MEGS:** Packaged in small, rugged containers, our Mobile Entertainment Gaming System (MEGS) provides entertainment options to service members in remote locations. Within minutes of opening a MEGS, service members are watching a movie or playing a video game. A tent is quickly transformed into a movie theater or game room – allowing those in harm's way a chance to relax and recharge. In 2015, 50MEGS were distributed around the world and supported more than 41,000 service members. Most have been sent to Afghanistan however, MEGS have also been sent to support units deployed to Australia, Guam, Philippines and Marines on embassy duty. To keep our service members connected with the latest technology, MEGS distributed in 2015 were more compact and light weight and included the latest gaming consoles – the new Xbox One.
- v. **CARE PACKAGES:** The USO Care Package Program is designed to provide service members with one of two different types of care packages – a Snack Pack or a Toiletry Pack. Both packs are 'desert tan' in color and are constructed with a durable nylon material that has a M.O.L.L.E. system on the back of the pouch for attachment on most military issued gear. The Snack Pack is assembled with a mixture of healthy treats, drink mixes and a collapsible water bottle. The Toiletry Pack comes equipped with a wide range of travel sized hygiene products.
- vi. **HOLIDAY CARE PACKAGES:** USO Holiday Care Packages include decorations, snacks, DVDs and games to help service members serving in remote corners of the world celebrate American holidays. In 2016, the USO has continued to offer seasonal holiday care packages to help keep our deployed service members connected to home. This year, more than 230 themed boxes will be delivered as our service members celebrate the holidays far from home. Expeditionary service members can also look forward to Super Bowl/Valentine's Day/St. Patrick's boxes which will feature seasonal items to help them celebrate the holidays.
- vii. **UNITED THROUGH READING® :** One of the most powerful things we do is connect a separated parent with their children back home. In 2006, the USO partnered with United

Through Reading® to host its nationally recognized reading program at select USO centers worldwide. Whether service members are stationed at a forward operating base in Afghanistan or otherwise geographically separated, they can visit their participating USO center to read a story aloud to a special child – son, daughter, niece, nephew or even a younger sibling. Story time is recorded on camera and the USO mails this priceless recording and book home. Children can watch and listen to their parent at bedtime, naptime or anytime. Families complete the circle by sending back a touch of home – a photo of the child watching their loved one reading the book. In the 10 years the USO has provided United Through Reading in our centers, more than 334,000 stories have been read, recorded and sent home. In 2015, more than 14,400 recordings were mailed to military families worldwide. This year to date, nearly 11,000 children with a loved one serving overseas has received a recording of a favorite story.

B. MILITARY FAMILIES

- i. **STRONGER FAMILIES:** The USO works with Stronger Families to bring the Oxygen Seminar to military couples to help them strengthen their relationships while working on tough issues in a fun, nonthreatening environment. Couples learn to improve their communication, better understand each other's needs, resolve conflict, rekindle romance and find renewed hope. The program is offered through three learning platforms: Oxygen Couples Seminars – a 1-2 day, 8 hour seminar that is customized to the attendee's relationship needs as determined through a pre-assessment questionnaire; Taste of Oxygen Events – a 60-90 minute presentation on relationship strengthening topics selected by the installation hosting the event; Oxygen365.com – an online platform that is free to all military couples, Oxygen365 offers a customized growth plan for couples that includes access to expert podcasts covering topics such as communication, conflict resolution, intimacy, finances and issues related to pre-deployment, deployment and reintegration. In 2015, more than 1,800 military attendees benefitted from 87 Oxygen Live Learning Events were held across the country, to include 53 couples Oxygen Seminars and 34 Taste of Oxygen Events for service members and their spouses. Through the end of September 2016, nearly 1,300 participants attended Oxygen Couples Seminars, more 1,600 participants benefitted from Taste of Oxygen events and nearly 7,000 subscribers are gaining insights from Oxygen365.
- ii. **COMFORT CREW FOR MILITARY KIDS:** The USO partners with the Comfort Crew for Military Kids to send award-winning author and motivational speaker Trevor Romain on tour to promote self-confidence and resiliency in military children ages 6 to 15 years old. Military families tell us about the power and impact Trevor has in helping military children tackle bullying in schools, adjust to life during and post-deployment and coping when a parent makes the ultimate sacrifice. Using innovative, inspiring and humorous stories, Trevor has spoken with thousands of children about the difficulties military kids face. Annually, Trevor and his crew embark on a multi-city *With You All the Way!* tour providing presentations to military children living throughout the U.S

Through the end of September 2016, the USO has hosted the *With You All the Way Tour!* at 32 locations providing 157 opportunities for nearly 21,000 military kids to engage with Trevor and team. In total, Comfort Crew for Military Kids has reached more than 44,000 military children and civilian children and adults.

- iii. **USO AND THE WHAT TO EXPECT FOUNDATION PRESENT SPECIAL DELIVERY:** In August 2013, the USO launched a new partnership with the What to Expect Foundation to host baby showers for military moms-to-be around the globe. Each shower includes a question and answer session with Heidi Murkoff, the best-selling author of the “What to Expect” book series and features traditional baby shower activities. The events are hosted by Heidi Murkoff in collaboration with a USO center and provide a touch of home for moms-to-be who are often away from their families, friends and support network while they are expecting. Since launching, the program has supported more than 3,600 military spouses and expectant active-duty mothers. In 2016 to date, 14 Special Delivery events – 10 showers and four reunions – have been hosted by Murkoff in collaboration with a USO center.
- iv. **SESAME STREET/USO EXPERIENCE:** The Sesame Street/USO Experience for Military Families, the longest running entertainment tour in USO history, made its debut in July 2008. To date, the tour has taken its message to 540,000 service members and military families and performed more than 1,000 shows on 150 military installations in 33 states and 11 countries. Additionally, the tour has logged more than 206,000 miles and distributed more than 2.6 million giveaways. The 2015 tour kicked off in May with the debut of a brand new show centered around the transition from military to civilian life in addition to its ever-popular show about moving. The 2016 tour is scheduled to perform more than 162 shows at 53 military bases in 25 states. In addition to tour stops around the world, through our partnership with Sesame Workshop, the USO supports military families by providing tools to help them adapt to many of life’s challenges. The USO offers an array of Sesame Workshop resource kits for children, distributing to USO centers and other military service agencies worldwide.
- v. **USO OPERATION THAT’S MY DRESS:** Military teens, female service members and spouses experience unique challenges related to military life with frequent moves, deployments and adapting to new homes and communities. The Operation That’s My Dress experience is just one of the many ways the USO connects to service members and their families. The USO provides thousands of new gowns/dresses to teenage girls, female service members and spouses from international fashion designer, Sherri Hill, among other notable designers in the fashion world just in time for the homecoming and prom seasons, military balls and the holidays. Operation That’s My Dress begins with a Fashion Show, featuring professional models showcasing evening/formal wear by world class designers and entertainment by the USO Show Troupe. The event also typically features a beauty bar with jewelry and fashion accessories for participants to get a completely accessorized look from head to toe. A Dress Expo, filled with hundreds of dress options, opens after the Fashion Show and models pair up with attendees to help them find the dress of their dreams. During the Dress Expo, stylists are on hand providing hair and make-up demonstrations and consultations to give participants additional resources to help them feel confident and beautiful.

C. TRANSITION

The need to support transitioning service members and their families is essential. The Chairman’s Office of Reintegration estimates more than 250,000 service members will transition back into civilian communities each of the next three years, according to the DoD’s Transition to Veteran Program Office. In the spring of 2015, the [USO Transition 360 Alliance](#) was announced.

This initiative is used to help military personnel and their families successfully transition back into civilian life after their service ends. Annually, 474,500 service members and family members begin the transition process. That means each day 1,300 service and family members face challenges such as finding a job, moving to a new place or starting at a different school. The USO Transition 360 Alliance will focus on three key pillars of a successful transition back into civilian life: plan for the future, pursue a new career and strengthen the family. From a single service member who is moving home after leaving the military to live with his or her parents after only four years in the military, to the service member who has spent 25 years in the military and is transitioning out with their spouse and children, the USO is building a roadmap to help them navigate this journey.

The USO Transition 360 Alliance partners include:

- **RP/6** (Lakewood, Washington), a team of case navigators known as scouts providing a unique concierge approach to creating action plans for the service/family members to ensure they are supported through a “no wrong door” experience. This methodology is effective via a coordinated network of public/private local and national resources who are connected through the ease of RP/6 delivery.
- **Hire Heroes USA** (Alpharetta, Georgia), provides in-person workshops, virtual career coaching, networking opportunities, a job board and other tools to help transitioning service members and spouses meet career goals as they transition to the civilian sector. Transition Specialists provide virtual coaching to help assess skills and experience, set career goals, create a strong resume and make a plan to find the job that’s right for that individual.
- **Hiring Our Heroes** (Washington, D.C.), holds Transition Summits on military installations around the country to help transitioning service members, veterans and military spouses find meaningful employment opportunities and connect with employers of every size and industry. The summits include town-hall style panel discussions, networking opportunities, employment workshops, and hiring fairs.
- **Stronger Families** (Seattle, Washington), helps military couples reconnect and strengthen their relationships by establishing effective ways of communicating and building trust and hope.
- **Comfort Crew for Military Kids** (Austin, Texas), supports military kids and teens as they overcome the obstacles of growing up in a military family.

The [USO Transition 360 Alliance](#) will leverage the USO’s global resources and the programmatic expertise of the partners specializing in military-to-civilian transitions to provide essential services to help service members and their families navigate this process. The USO Transition 360 Alliance partners selected by the USO demonstrated a record of excellence and the ability to meet the needs of service members and scale their services globally.

Below is an expanded description of each of the additional USO Transition 360 Alliance partners:

- i. **RP/6:** RP/6 (formerly RallyPoint/6) has created a unique transition model by opening a facility that in military terms can be coined a “rally point” or civilian “one-stop-shop” and is centered with the intent to connect targeted resources for transitioning service members and their families in more efficient, effective, and positive ways. The USO opened three RP/6

sites in 2015, one each at Fort Campbell, Kentucky; Fort Carson, Colorado and Fort Hood, Texas.

By partnering with RP/6, the USO will provide a first-of-its kind concierge approach globally for connecting service members and their families with specific resources and organizations, within their community that will support them on their path forward. The new USO/RP6 locations will be co-located with USO centers across the country. By opening multiple USO/RP6 locations, service members will be better served globally, and will have consistent support in various locations, eventually at most major military installations.

- ii. **HIRE HEROES USA:** The USO, in collaboration with Hire Heroes USA (HHUSA), hosts career transition workshops and Virtual Career Coaching for active-duty, wounded, ill and injured service members, their spouses and caregivers no matter where they are located. The workshops focus on resume writing, mock interviews, professional work practices and translating prior military experience into a civilian career.

For those service members who are unable to attend a Transition Workshop due to timing or location, we are offering Virtual Career Coaching. This includes all the support and materials of the Transition Workshop, but it is conducted one-on-one with a Transition Specialist over the phone and email.

In 2016, the USO hosted 83 workshops. In 2016, the USO provided this program domestically and abroad to active-duty service members and their spouses. In addition to the 83 workshops, it also provided One-on-One Career Coaching to more than 9,800 service members and spouses around the globe. Over the course of this program, USO and Hire Heroes USA have placed more than 3000 individuals in careers.

- iii. **HIRING OUR HEROES:** Mid-2016, the USO added the US Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Hiring Our Heroes to the USO Transition 360 Alliance. Hiring Our Heroes and the USO co-present 12 transition summits across the country. The transition summits are held on military installations to help transitioning service members, spouse and veterans find meaningful employment opportunities. The 2-3 day summits provide service members and spouses insight into industry trends, hiring practices and job search tools through workshops and town-hall panels presented by corporate sponsors and government advocates. The summits culminate in an afternoon-long hiring fair with several hundred employers looking to fill openings with transitioning service members and veterans.

The summits also provide installation and unit leadership with an overview of the importance of a transition plan for their service members. Through panels and meetings, leaders learn about the changing landscape of the transition process. And how to become an advocate for these services when counseling their service members.

D. WOUNDED, ILL AND INJURED SERVICE MEMBERS, THEIR FAMILIES AND CAREGIVERS

- i. **USO WARRIOR AND FAMILY CENTERS:** Opened in 2003, the USO Warrior Center at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center (LRMC) in Landstuhl, Germany, provides a "home away from home" to wounded service members. In 2014, the USO Warrior Center averaged more than 4,000 warrior visits per month, supporting a wounded, ill and injured service members. This includes

many who visit multiple times daily between medical appointments. A wide spectrum of programs and activities are always available, but the most popular features among service members are the home-cooked meals and family-style cookouts.

On April 1, 2014, we opened the doors to our second USO Warrior and Family Center located at Naval Support Activity Bethesda, home of Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. The facility offers a comprehensive array of specialized services and programs in a supportive, home-like setting. The more than 16,000-square-foot facility includes classrooms, sports lounges, business centers, healing gardens and more, was created expressly for our nation's healing heroes and their families. The center was visited more than 96,000 times in 2015.

Our USO Warrior and Family Center at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, with more than 22,000 square feet dedicated to serving our nation's wounded, ill and injured service members, their families and caregivers, as well as the active-duty and military families, was visited more than 127,000 times in 2015.

The Fort Belvoir facility is a state-of-the-art, ADA-compliant space offering a place for service members and their families to relax, learn and have fun away from the grind of the hospital. The communal kitchen, with its sleek-yet-natural design and bountiful treats, is one of the central traffic points at this USO Warrior and Family Center. Simply put, it's where everyone wants to be, whether they're grabbing a snack, fixing a favorite meal, running into old friends—or meeting new ones. Sponsors have hosted dinners in the kitchen, the dining room and the outdoor grill, which has also been popular for barbecues and entertainment. The art studio offers a variety of programs, which can be therapeutic for service members and their families as well as our healing heroes. The Respite Suite, offering massage/reiki and yoga, is another frequently used space. The Business Center has also been a busy gathering point for service members and their families with its computer workstations, places to connect a laptop or iPad, as well as copy and fax services.

E. FAMILIES OF THE FALLEN

The USO has supported every dignified transfer at Dover Air Force Base since March 1991. USO centers are located in the heart of Dover Air Force Base to support families of the fallen, as well as those service members assigned to the Air Force Mortuary Affairs complex. Additionally, as family notifications occur at all times of the day and night, the USO works 24/7 to coordinate among USO centers across the country. The USO is there to support and comfort families who have just received tragic news as they travel to and from Dover. The USO's reach expands beyond Dover with a vast network of support for our families of the fallen from coast to coast.

The USO also supports the families of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice through our partnerships with organizations like the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) and Fisher House, as well as the support received at various USO centers across the United States. The USO and TAPS also provide Survivor Resource Kits to newly bereaved family members. Filled with comfort items, books of support, personal notes and information, these kits provide a warm embrace in the form of a carefully crafted package. Each kit is carefully tailored to the specific family's circumstance of loss, relationship to the deceased, cause of death and other family needs that are shared with us. For our nation's smallest heroes, the USO supports TAPS Good Grief Camps, TAPS Kids Campouts, Adult Retreats and the Annual Suicide Survivor

Conference. The camps provide a safe atmosphere for children to connect with others coping with similar feelings, helping them to establish a support system. No matter what the hour or the need, the USO is there for the families of the fallen.

F. **ENTERTAINMENT ACTIVITIES**

The USO is probably best known for entertainment tours that bring celebrities and performers who donate their time and talents to visit our service members and families wherever they serve. As of September 20, 2016, the USO deployed 46 celebrity entertainers on 21 tours to 12 countries and 25 states, and entertained more than 85,244 service members and military families. Four of these tours were to a combat zone. The Sesame Street/USO Experience for Military Families tour kicked off in May featuring shows centered around the transition from military to civilian life as well as moving. The 2016 tour is expected to perform 162 shows at 50 military bases in 25 states.

- i. **JOINING FORCES:** The USO partners with the White House's Joining Forces initiative to strengthen military families around the world. Joining Forces focuses on three key issues facing military families – education, employment and wellness. The USO's support of this initiative includes creating Mother's Day gift boxes with the congressional spouses and book readings for military families stateside and in Germany featuring Dr. Jill Biden and her children's book "Don't Forget, God Bless Our Troops." On May 5, 2016, President Barack Obama, Vice President Joseph Biden, First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden joined the USO and celebrity comedians Judd Apatow, Mike Birbiglia, Kristen Schaal, Hasan Minhaj, John Mulaney and Jeff Ross to commemorate our 75th anniversary and the 5th anniversary of *Joining Forces*. Hosted by USO tour veteran Jon Stewart and featuring a special appearance by David Letterman, more than 1,400 service members and their families at JB Andrews enjoyed the event live. Additionally, the first 20 minutes was live streamed on WhiteHouse.gov for service members around the world.

IV. **PROVIDING THE RESOURCES FOR USO PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

We often hear from people who say they want to give back to our nation's service members, but they don't know how to get involved. The USO provides a variety of ways to show support and appreciation for our military heroes and helps make a difference in their lives. Individuals, corporations or organizations can find creative ways to give at www.USOWishbook.org, choosing from the virtual gift catalog. Americans can also visit www.uso.org/force to learn how they can join Force Behind the Forces by making an online donation, sending a message of support to our service men and women or by finding a local USO to learn more or help the USO connect America to our service members by sending a message of support at www.uso.org/force.

- A. **USO WISHBOOK:** Found at USOWishbook.org, this online alternative giving catalog offers donors a way to support the USO by purchasing symbolic gifts for friends and loved ones that help America's service members and their families. Since the launch of USO Wishbook in 2011, nearly \$3 million has been raised to support our nation's military community, which translates to more than 74,000 gifts purchased. The most popular gifts are "Phone Calls Home," "Comfort

Food Package,” and “Long Distance Bedtime Stories.” Throughout the year, gifts are added in honor of special gift giving occasions. In September 2016, the USO Wishbook transferred to a new giving catalogue platform. Phase II of the relaunch will introduce additional gifts aligning with new programmatic operations. Gift updates will begin towards the end of 2016 and move into 2017. USO Wishbook leverages print and corporate partnership integrations to grow this online giving opportunity and continue to give Americans a way to support our service members and their families in a fun, creative and simple way.

- USO meets all 20 Better Business Bureau Standards for Charity Accountability and is a Gold-level GuideStar Exchange participant, demonstrating its commitment to transparency.

To learn more about the USO and how we serve our service members and their families, visit us at:

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